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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/754,377	01/05/2001	Katsuhiko Sumita	2224-0181P	3526

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EXAMINER

SHEWAREGED, BETELHEM

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1774

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DATE MAILED: 06/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

09/754,377

Applicant(s)

SUMITA ET AL.

Examiner

Betelhem Shewareged

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 January 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 18-25 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2, 3, 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

I. Claims 1-17, drawn to image receiving sheet, classified in class 428, subclass 195.

II. Claims 18-25, drawn to method of making, classified in class 427, subclass 1+.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product, (e.g., providing a coating solution containing a binder and inorganic particles, applying the coating solution on to a substrate to form an image receiving sheet having a substrate and a porous layer).

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. During a telephone conversation with Richard J. Gallagher on 05/17/2002 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-17. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this

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Office action. Claims 18-25 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Objections

6. Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informalities: the comma after the term "substrate" in line 3 is improper. Canceling the comma avoids further confusion. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 1-8 and 10-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

a. In claim 1, is the porous layer self-standing? If the porous layer is not self-standing, claim 1 should include a substrate to support the porous layer. If the porous

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layer is self-standing, it should be indicated in claim 1 and applicant should provide a support in the specification.

b. In claim 5, it is not clear if the porous layer further comprise the claimed hydrophilic polymer, or it is not clear if the organic acid still in the porous layer.

c. In claim 13, it is not clear if the porous layer is porous support having organic acid on at least one side of the porous support or if the porous layer is applied on porous support having organic acid on at least one side of the porous support.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or

(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

10. Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hamada et al. (US 6,177,181).

Hamada discloses a recording sheet having a porous substrate and a porous membrane onto the porous substrate. The porous substrate is a nonwoven fabric (col. 10, line 44). The porous membrane comprises an organic acid such as phthalic acid (col. 5, line 29), hydrophilic polymer such as cellulose derivatives (col. 4, line 15). The

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mean pore size of the porous membrane is 0.002 to 0.35 micrometer (col. 7, line 47), and the porous membrane has a microphase separation structure (col. 4, line 18). The porous membrane is separable from the substrate (col. 11, line 46). With respect to solubility and adhesion strength, it is elementary that the mere recitation of newly discovered function or property, inherently possessed by things in the prior art, does not cause a claim drawn to those things to distinguish over the prior art. *In re Swinehart et al.*, 169 USPQ 226 at 229. Since the Hamada reference teaches all of Applicant's claimed compositional and positional limitations, it is inherent that the reference article function in the same manner claimed by Applicant. The burden is upon Applicant to prove that the subject matter shown to be in the prior art does not possess the characteristic relied on.

With respect claim 13, the porous substrate would inherently contain organic acid for the following reason. The solution containing organic acid for making the porous membrane is applied on a substrate and then dried. Since the substrate is porous some of the solution containing organic acid would sink into the porous substrate before drying.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 6, 9, 14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hamada et al. (US 6,177,181).

Hamada discloses a recording sheet having a porous substrate and a porous membrane onto the porous substrate. The porous substrate is a nonwoven fabric (col. 10, line 44). The porous membrane comprises an organic acid such as phthalic acid (col. 5, line 29), hydrophilic polymer such as cellulose derivatives (col. 4, line 15). The porous membrane has a microphase separation structure (col. 4, line 18). With respect to solubility, it is elementary that the mere recitation of newly discovered function or property, inherently possessed by things in the prior art, does not cause a claim drawn to those things to distinguish over the prior art. *In re Swinehart et al.*, 169 USPQ 226 at 229. Since the Hamada reference teaches all of Applicant's claimed compositional and positional limitations, it is inherent that the reference article function in the same manner claimed by Applicant. The burden is upon Applicant to prove that the subject matter shown to be in the prior art does not possess the characteristic relied on. This burden has not yet been met.

Hamada does not disclose the claimed content of the organic acid, and the claimed amount of the organic acid on a dried matter basis. The experimental modification of this prior art in order to ascertain optimum operating conditions fails to render applicants' claims patentable in the absence of unexpected results. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to adjust the content of organic acid, and amount of organic acid on a dried matter basis in order to optimize the water resistance and ink-absorbing properties of the layer. A prima facie

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case of obviousness may be rebutted, however, where the results of the optimizing variable, which is known to be result-effective, are unexpectedly good. *In re Boesch and Slaney*, 205 USPQ 215. To date, this burden has not been sustained.

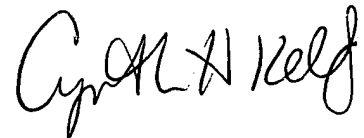
Conclusion

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Betelhem Shewareged whose telephone number is 703-305-0389. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thur. 7:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cynthia H Kelly can be reached on 703-308-0449. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-5408 for regular communications and 703-305-3599 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0651.

CYNTHIA H. KELLY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700



BS *BS*
May 30, 2002.